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ABSTRACT

Four strategies that deans and vice-presidents can use to enhance teaching are suggested. The first strategy is to seek out and fund teaching support activities that are the state of the art in each discipline. The second is to reward professors for excellence in teaching more than for excellence in research. Third, administrators should develop teaching evaluation systems that are valid, reliable, and supported by the faculty. Finally, administrators should distinguish between research that enhances teaching and research that detracts from teaching using the following dimensions: time requirements, relationship to subject matter taught, and involvement of students in the research process. Teaching is served best when administrators budget funds to acquaint teachers with new teaching developments in their disciplines and to purchase equipment that will allow faculty to implement these developments in the classroom. Rewards for excellence in teaching fall into four categories: symbolic rewards, interpersonal rewards, resources, and articulation with major career decision points. The teaching evaluation process should be based in part on documentary evidence, including a complete set of course syllabi and teaching vitae.
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STRATEGIES DEANS AND VICE-PRESIDENTS CAN
USE TO ENHANCE TEACHING IN
THEIR INSTITUTIONS*

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Teaching is the *raison d'être* for the existence of colleges and universities. Ninety-eight percent of them could not last out the year on the basis of research and community service alone. This is reflected in the verbal statements of college and university administrators about teaching. The authors have been involved in four studies of national samples of administrators in higher education: social science deans (1977), graduate deans (1982), continuing and adult education deans (1984), and chief liberal arts academic officers (1984). In all four samples, teaching was identified as the most important factor in tenure and promotion decisions, department and program evaluations, and merit salary awards for excellence in professorial performance. Opinion on these matters was practically unanimous except among graduate deans. Even among these champions of research and extramural grants, 62 percent of our respondents identified teaching as very important in their department evaluations and 59 percent reported that teaching was the most important consideration in tenure and promotion decisions.

Throughout our research on the structural placement of teaching in American institutions of higher education, we have consistently found that administrators want to be more supportive of teaching than they actually are in practice. The following four suggestions represent our judgment about the best ways administrators can use to bring their behavior into conformity with their verbal statements about the importance of teaching in their institutions.

1. Seek out and fund teaching support activities that represent the state of the art in each discipline. Teaching principles may be universal, but teaching methodologies and the organization of content areas are not. They vary from discipline to discipline, and from time to time within each discipline. Teaching is served best when administrators budget funds to acquaint faculty with new teaching developments in their disciplines and to purchase equipment that will allow faculty to implement these developments in the classroom. Faculty can be encouraged to keep up to date on teaching

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developments in their disciplines through memberships in state, regional, and national disciplinary organizations, subscriptions to teaching journals, purchases of books about teaching, and attendance at workshops on teaching innovations. Teaching journals and teaching books should not be placed directly in the library when they are purchased. They first should be circulated to department faculty using a routing list, then cataloged in the library. Many national disciplinary organizations now have specialized journals, newsletters, workshop series, and resource centers devoted to the enhancement of teaching. Attendance at disciplinary teaching enhancement workshops, whether they deal with teaching methodologies or new knowledge in the field, should be funded with at least the same vigor as trips to give papers at national scholarly meetings and to serve on national committees.

Some administrators may scoff at this suggestion, offering the opinion that good teaching never changes and is the same in all disciplines. Others may say that faculty who wish to read teaching materials should buy them with their own funds. Can you imagine telling a researcher that today's equipment is no better than earlier generations of research equipment? Administrators who care as much about teaching as they do about research should pay equal attention to the state of the art in teaching. As to having the faculty buy their own books and journals on teaching, what institution expects its professionals to bring their tools to work with them every morning? Teaching is no different. Administrators who care about teaching should routinely provide faculty with the tools of their trade.

2. Reward professors for excellence in teaching more than for excellence in research. Except for those graduate institutions which emphasize research over teaching (roughly 40 percent of the graduate institutions we studied, but less than a quarter of these institutions nationwide), it is appropriate to reward excellence in teaching more heavily than excellence in research, scholarship, and grant acquisition. Rewards for excellence in teaching fall naturally into four categories: (1) symbolic rewards, (2) interpersonal rewards, (3) resources, and (4) articulation with major career decision points.

Symbolic rewards include awards and other honors that focus the attention of the scholarly community on teaching excellence, as well as the appointment of outstanding teachers to important committees. Symbolic rewards increase the status of exceptional teachers, thus motivating those professors who aspire to high status to work hard at their teaching skills. Interpersonal rewards function in the same way as symbolic rewards. When administrators spend more time with good teachers than with other professors, they are bestowing an interpersonal reward which tends to raise the status of the teachers in the eyes of their colleagues. Developing close long-term relations with teachers, talking positively about their teaching accomplishments, smiling at them in company, and inviting them to important events are other examples of interpersonal rewards.

The third category of rewards for teaching is resource allocation. When excellent teachers find that it is easier for them to receive funding for professional development than their less teaching-oriented colleagues, they will be gratified and confirmed in their decision to concentrate on teaching instead of research in their careers. Research has so many more career rewards in the educational marketplace than teaching that many talented teachers will be pulled toward it unless the colleges and universities in which they teach right the imbalance through careful resource allocation policies in support of teaching.

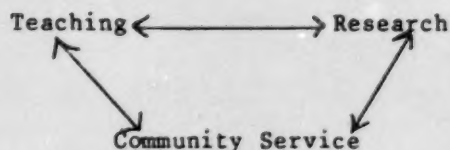
Articulation with major career decision points is the final category of rewards for excellence in teaching. All of the preceding rewards for teaching will fail unless teaching is fully articulated with all of the major decision points in professorial careers. These include the decision to hire and later decisions about retention, tenure (with its opposite, termination), and promotion. When teaching is agreed to be the most important aspect of professors' work, it is essential that it be treated as the most significant factor in all of these personnel decisions. Otherwise, faculty will never take seriously the verbal statements in support of teaching that are made by administrators.

3. Develop teaching evaluation systems that are valid, reliable, and supported by the faculty. It does no good to articulate teaching quality with major career decision points unless faculty and administrators have agreed on means for measuring the quality of teaching performance in and out of the classroom. Teaching evaluation systems will vary somewhat according to the goals of the institution, the quality of its students, and the vagaries of the political process through which the evaluation system is developed and approved in each institutional setting. Regardless of these variations, all teaching evaluation systems should include clear mechanisms and standards for the evaluation of teaching in the classroom, teaching outside of the classroom, and documentary evidence related to teaching. Teaching in the classroom refers to the teacher's actual behavior in class, which is often measured by student evaluation forms and direct classroom observations by departmental representatives. Teaching outside of the classroom includes advising responsibilities, tutoring, reviewing tests with students (if that is not fully done in class), and participation in extracurricular activities such as giving talks in the residence halls and organizing symposia. Students want to feel that they share membership with their teachers in a scholarly community, not that they have paid for a certain number of lecture hours with otherwise disinterested professors.

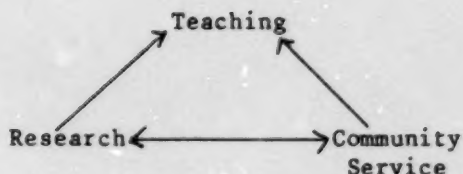
Documentary evidence relating to teaching should be part of every teaching evaluation process. Documentary evidence begins with a complete set of course syllabi and ends with a standard format for a teaching vita. The teaching vita should have sections for every type of teaching effort and teacher development activity engaged in so that the professor's total teaching accomplishments can be grasped from studying it.

These evaluation standards and mechanisms apply to every personnel decision from hiring to promotion to full professor. For example, the same teaching vita format used in tenure evaluations should be requested of applicants for teaching positions. Prospective professors brought in for interviews should be required to teach at least three regular classes to students in addition to the now almost obligatory scholarly lecture delivered to departmental faculty.

4. Distinguish between research that enhances teaching and research that detracts from teaching. Fund only those research activities which have a favorable impact on teaching quality. Follow the same principle in evaluating consulting and unpaid community service by faculty members. The relationships among teaching, research and community service will then change from:



to:



In this paradigm, teaching ascends to the highest level in the need hierarchy of the scholarly community. Professors are not categorized as teachers or researchers, but rather are united as teacher-scholars.

Research that enhances teaching can be distinguished from research that detracts from teaching along three dimensions. These are time requirements, relationship to subject matter taught, and involvement of students in the research process. Narrowness of focus, an often maligned aspect of faculty research, does not necessarily harm teaching performance so long as the other dimensions of teaching relevance are satisfactory. Research that enhances teaching does not take up so much of a professor's time so that teaching is undermined. It is related to the subject matter taught (even though the focus of the research may be too narrow to merit more than a few minutes in a class lecture). Finally, students should become involved in a professor's research as assistants, coauthors and evaluators whenever possible. The essence of the positive effect research has on teaching is the excitement it generates in professors about their

subject matter. The closer students are to the research process, the more this excitement will affect them directly as well as looping indirectly through its effect on the professor's attitudes.

Summary

In this paper, we have suggested four strategies that deans and vice-presidents can use to enhance teaching in their institutions. The first strategy is to seek out and fund teaching support activities that are the state of the art in each discipline. The second is to reward professors for excellence in teaching more than for excellence in research. Third, administrators should develop teaching evaluation systems that are valid, reliable, and supported by the faculty. Our final point is that we must distinguish between research that enhances teaching and research that detracts from teaching. Once that task has been completed, it is then possible for administrators to limit their funding to those research projects that are likely to have a favorable impact on teaching quality.